

## Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:MKBERRY:DP

APPROVED BY NEA/P:EOJONES

S/PRS - MR. FUNSETH (INFO)

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EUR/P - MR. JERABEK

IO/P - MR. BLACHLY

SSM - MR. MCANDREW

NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER

AF/P - MR. POPE

NEA - MS. GRIFFIN

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R 232153Z AUG 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

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USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY SANA  
AMEMBASSY TUNIS  
USINT BAGHDAD  
AMEMBASSY DOHA  
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI  
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT  
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO  
USMISSION SINAI  
CINCEUR

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GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL, CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A/

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - AUGUST 23, 1976

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS  
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR AUGUST 23,  
1976:

Q. IN LIGHT OF THE DISPATCH OF THE TWO DIPLOMATS TO THE  
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY OR CHRISTIAN AREA OF LEBANON, CAN YOU  
TELL US WHAT THE CURRENT AMERICAN POSITION IS, NOT ONLY ON  
PARTITION BUT ON THE CONCEPT OF TWO ZONES PERHAPS IN LEB-  
ANON?

A. IN THE FIRST PLACE, WE REAFFIRM THAT WE REMAIN OPPOSED  
TO ANY PARTITION OR DE FACTO PARTITION OF LEBANON AS A  
SOLUTION TO THE LEBANESE TRAGEDY. WE AFFIRM AGAIN THAT  
WE FIRMLY SUPPORT LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY, ITS TERRITORIAL  
INTEGRITY, AND ITS NATIONAL COHESION AND UNITY. THESE  
OFFICERS HAVE BEEN SENT TEMPORARILY TO A PART OF LEBANON  
WHICH CANNOT NOW BE REACHED BY OUR EMBASSY PERSONNEL. AND  
IT DOES NOT IMPLY ANY POLICY CHANGE, AND IT IS BEING  
DONE FOR PURELY PRACTICAL REASONS.

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Q. WHAT IS THE ESSENT OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY'S CONTACT  
WITH THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION?

A. UNCHANGED. IT REMAINS ONLY CONCERNED WITH THE SECURITY  
OF OUR PERSONNEL.

Q. DID YOU SEND THESE TWO DIPLOMATS TO PREVENT PARTITION?  
YOU KNOW THERE ARE RUMORS THAT THE CHRISTIANS HAVE MADE A

DE FACTO PARTITION, SO --

A. THE PURPOSE IN SENDING THEM IS SO THAT THEY CAN HAVE CONTACT WITH A WIDE SEGMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP, WHICH WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO HAVE CONTACT WITH BECAUSE OUR PEOPLE IN WEST BEIRUT HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO GET INTO EAST BEIRUT OR INTO THE AREAS PRESENTLY UNDER CHRISTIAN CONTROL.

NOW, I MIGHT ADD THAT THERE HAVE BEEN PRESS REPORTS THAT THEY HAVE MET WITH A NUMBER OF CHRISTIAN LEADERS. HOWEVER, WE HAVE NO REPORTS FROM THEM TO CONFIRM THAT. BUT THEY ARE PLANNING TO MEET THESE PEOPLE. WE JUST DO NOT HAVE CONFIRMATION OF IT.

Q. ARE THEY BRINGING ANY PARTICULAR PLAN OR IDEA?

A. NO, I DO NOT THINK THERE IS A SPECIFIC U.S. PLAN OTHER THAN WHAT WE HAVE BEEN SAYING PUBLICLY AND REPEATING -- OUR STANDARD POSITION OF ENCOURAGING THE LEBANESE LEADERS TO COME ABOUT TO A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. BUT NO, I AM NOT AWARE OF ANY SPECIFIC PLAN.

Q. THEY COULD HAVE GONE BY THE ROUTE THEY CHOSE TO TAKE AT ANY TIME IN THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF GOING NOW? IN OTHER WORDS, EXPLAIN THE TIMING.

A. I DO NOT HAVE A SPECIFIC ANSWER, JUST THE JUDGMENT THAT A PERIOD OF TIME HAS NOW GONE ON SINCE JUNE IN WHICH WE HAVE NOT HAD CONTACT WITH THESE IMPORTANT LEADERS AND WE WANTED TO HAVE CONTACT. AND I SUPPOSE THE ASSUMPTION WAS IN THE WEEKS SINCE THEN THAT THE SITUATION WOULD IMPROVE SO THAT WE WOULD BE ABLE TO HAVE THESE

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CONTACTS. AND, UNFORTUNATELY, THIS HAS NOT COME TO PASS.

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## Message Attributes

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